

Adult Education Advisory Committee
June 8, 2005
Utah State Office of Education
Room 241
10:00 A.M. – 1:00 P.M.

Approved Minutes

PRESENT: Members: James Andersen (chair), Suzette Hudson, Cindy Krueger, Karen Kwan (for Edie Mitko), Wayne Mifflin, Herb Clark, Hector Mendiola, Don Uchida, Jeff Galli, Sandra Grant, Carolyn Johnson (secretary), and Gail Burningham (secretary).
Others: Mary Shumway, Sue Myers, David Frost, and Nate Sutherland (UEN).

EXCUSED: Edie Mitko, Paula Oakey (chair elect), Mary Ann Parkinson, Andrea Worthen, Edwin Espinel and Kim Dohrer (past chair).

Welcome and Introductions

The Adult Education Advisory meeting was held June 8, 2005 at the Utah State Office of Education in room 241. James Andersen welcomed everyone. Everyone introduced him/herself and stated the group they represent.

Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the May 11, 2005 meeting were reviewed and two corrections are to be made. 1) On page 4, the word base's was changed to basis. 2) The last paragraph under WIA Plus was corrected to read "Don Uchida pointed out that both budgets in the National Senate and House have basically a two billion dollar funding cut in the appropriations committees of which adult education is a part."

A motion to approve the April minutes was made by Wayne Mifflin. Suzette Hudson seconded the motion and the minutes were unanimously approved.

H B 232

Dr. Claudia Thorum and David Frost presented the issue of the U-BSCT assessment test and how it is problematic for adults to the Legislative Education Interim Committee. Mary said that it was presented very clearly and they did an excellent job. They prepared a paper for this presentation which is attached to these minutes. The presentation by Claudia and David helped the legislators realize that another assessment is needed or something else needs to be changed. If adults are required to take U-BSCT, the legislature will need to change the language, as adults will not have the opportunity to take the test three times between now and next June. To be eligible to get an alternative diploma a student has to fail the U-BSCT three times.

The legislature discussed using the GED test as an alternative test for adults; this is a concern because it is a more difficult test. Using the TABE could be a possibility; we could ask for a quality assessment, and then do an analysis of TABE versus U-BSCT. There is a security issue with the TABE test; it would need to be more secure if it is to be used and if used it will need to be regulated as it is given differently at different districts and sites. The TABE test is not locked away as is the ACT and GED tests and it would cost a lot to create another test. Maybe we should focus on what our legal personnel's opinions are on this; with regards to a obtaining a

status change or getting an alternative test approved. In the June adult education directors meeting we will discuss recommendations to give to the legislature.

Adult Education Transfer to another Agency Consideration

There has been talk again about moving adult education to another agency. Senator Howard Stephenson wants to explore moving adult education to the Department of Workforce Services (DWS) or Higher Education; however neither of these agencies wants to oversee adult education. It was asked if the State Office of Education oversees the age group 5 - 18 years old or the K-12 grades. There was discussion regarding the pros and cons of moving adult education to DWS, UCAT or other colleges.

John Flores called Jim Andersen about moving adult education to the ATC's. The adult education population will not be well served in the colleges, as there is a skill gap between our adult education population and college students. David Frost pointed out other problems such as: 1) Higher tuition which adult education students can't afford. 2) If adult education is moved from the K-12 system and if the school facilities are used for classes, then buildings would have to be rented. Since districts give diplomas this could become problematic also.

WIA Plus Resources Update

Don distributed letters regarding the WIA Plus legislation. The first was regarding the Department of Labor's opposition to S. 1021 (Workforce Investment Act Amendments of 2005) in its present form. Second, a memo from Secretary Margaret Spelling to the employees at the Department of Education regarding her trips and what was happening in regards to that department. The third letter, Keith R. Beichner wrote to Secretary Spelling suggesting that the One-Stop Centers which she is promoting is not an effective program and gave reasons why. He suggested that the Bush administration wanted to tear down the best "jobs program for people with disabilities" that existed. He stated that the past four Commissioners of the Rehabilitations Services are protesting her actions.

The National Governors' Association (NGA) wants the flexibility of the WIA Plus without the cost reductions. There is an amendment to consolidate all of the money with the exception of rehabilitation and adult education. UREAP is optimistic that the funding will be restored. The NGA is pushing for a light version of WIA Plus and to exempt Adult Education and Rehabilitation from the consolidation.

Supporting Rural Districts Continued

Because smaller districts require more funding per student to run a program, they would like to move the census money to the base. In the present language of the rule the money needs to be moved to outcomes.

Giving rural districts greater support will be addressed at the June Directors meeting. It will take time to get the issues on paper and to involve the not yet hired state adult education director in the process. Discussions to help meet rural districts needs should focus on costs and students needs.

Some ideas to help support smaller districts are: 1) UEN courses could be done on Ed-net. 2) The state could negotiate a contract with A+. These could be used in the evenings at schools (no

classes). Some of the larger districts could be convinced to give up the base. Smaller districts could write grants for additional funding.

By November we need recommendations to assist rural districts. State leadership funds could be used for staff development and Best Practices. We could have an Ad Hoc committee to help address the needs of rural districts.

Central Region DWS - Adult Directors Meeting

Suzette gave a presentation with a handout on Central Region DWS's workgroup recommendations to Jon Pierpont and upper management. Jon Pierpont has priorities and recognizes the need for adult education; he is looking to collaborate with adult education and to streamline the referral process. DWS and their employment centers need to know of the services offered by adult education. Helen Thacher and WEEDA recommended that adult education persons be on their regional councils and to have ongoing meetings with adult education directors to enhance utilization of adult education services (ESL, GED, HSC). A pilot model will be look at. Other DWS regions have their autonomy, but they were encouraged to look at this Central region model. It was found that 20 % of DWS's clients need training. High School Completion, GED and English Second Language programs have been successful and will be utilized.

Steve Leyba's listed top priorities as: 1) Solidify, simplify and streamline customer pathways between Adult Education programs / DWS with current telephone numbers, requirements, access points, verifications, rules, fees/costs etc. 2) Active introduction/coordination and education/understanding between adult education/local employment centers. 3) Profile a successful customer utilizing appropriate screening/assessment tools." Suzette's handout is available; she will keep us updated on decisions and activities.

Lunch

Quality Standards for English Language Acquisition

Utah was chosen as one of 22 states to participate in the Center for Adult English Acquisition to help states improve capacity for ESL students. To get a broad sense of what kinds of trainings that are needed for ESL teachers a survey will be conducted. This survey will help in planning staff development training. There are also surveys for ABE teachers, administrators and administration staff. Sandi had planned that the survey be sent out by Friday and returned by June 21, 2005.

Other Business

Adult Education Director Position is to be posted hopefully this week.

Federal Audit site visits will be in August.

Kim Dohrer has had a transfer of assignment and will most likely be leaving this committee.

Top twenty most frequently asked questions are being identified and answered. This will be an agenda item for the directors meeting on June 21, 2005. Directors may have more questions to add to this list.

MIS Training

Seven MIS Training sessions have taken place throughout the state to train those who input information for federal reports. It is a federal requirement to have this system and it will be implemented July 1, 2005. We are taking comments on what is needed to make the system work for programs. Also there are semantics issues. It is hoped that other agencies will have access to student records. If districts feel they need a transition time they can work both systems. We need some programs to practice on this system and some reports need to be run in the next two weeks. Dennis Crane (San Juan) is already starting to train his staff on this system.

Agenda Items for July's Meeting

- U-BSCT and H.B. 232
- Top 20 Questions
- Adult Education Director's meeting

Adjourn

Jim Andersen called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Suzette Hudson moved to adjourn the meeting and Herb Clark seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion passed. The next meeting will be held on July 13, 2005 from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. in room 241.

Impact of UBSCT on Adult High School Completion Students and Recommendations for Solution

Competency testing is appropriate for Adult High School Completion students.

The UBSCT test administration policy and schedule create a barrier for adult students. By USOE rule, UBSCT is administered twice per year during specific school hours, on specific dates, in school facilities. This creates a barrier for adults:

- Adults complete high school graduation requirements year round and need to finalize their graduation without waiting 4 to 8 months for the next testing date.
- Adults need to move on to jobs, education, military and other SEOP goals as soon as possible. Many opportunities could be lost if adults are not able to take UBSCT in a timely way.
- Many adults work or have child care needs during the times that UBSCT is currently administered.
- Some adult students are incarcerated, or have parole restrictions at the time they complete their high school course work. Are they released to the local high school for testing? There are no provisions for making the UBSCT available to them.
- There are deep and powerful social disincentives, particularly in small communities, for adults to take UBSCT in a classroom of teenagers they know from the community and that is proctored by teachers who may be neighbors and acquaintances.
- UBSCT testing imposes a significant barrier to adult taxpayers who wish to move forward with their lives.

There are valid test alternatives to UBSCT already in place that could be used to assess competency for adult students. Several tests currently in use have been validated and normed, and would be appropriate alternative tests to allow adults the opportunity to meet graduation requirements and their SEOP goals. They include:

- GED (General Education Development Test), a nationally normed test that demonstrates student competency at the ninth grade level. In many states passing the GED is considered high school equivalency.
- TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) forms 9 - 10 level D, a nationally normed test designed to measure a student's functioning level. This test is a predictor of success on the GED.
- Other tests used for specific licensure and/or college, university or trade school admittance that measure student ability levels as predictors of success in the program could be considered. (ACT, SAT, etc.)

UBSCT could be used as an assessment tool for adults, *if the test could be taken on demand, and online.*

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Amend 53A-1 to:

- a. exempt adult students whose class graduated prior to 2006 from competency testing
 - b. exempt adult students who have a current SEOP that does not require competency testing from testing
2. Amend 53A-1 to allow an alternative test for demonstrating basic skills competency. Board Rule R277-705-6-A would go into effect because alternative tests would be allowed based on state law.
3. Direct the USOE to charge the Utah State Board of Education Adult Education Advisory Council to study the issue of competency testing for adults and make a recommendation prior to the next legislative session. Considerations should include:
 - a. Making provisions for USBCT to be taken on demand, and online. An on-line test administration would be cost effective and logistically practical, while maintaining the security of this high stakes test; and/or
 - b. Identification of appropriate alternative tests

For further information, contact:

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